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General Information re:

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

Established by an Act of the
Saskatchewan Legislature and
proclaimed May 1, 1972.

15/10/73

Pam: 061.1 [Saskatchewan.]
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POLARPAM

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Dept. of N. Saskatchewan
La Ronge

The Department of Northern Saskatchewan ...

"We look to the new department to provide a new focus for building government services in the North, with the involvement of the people living in northern communities. This means involvement not only in an advisory capacity -- but also in a developing capacity of self-government and local decision-making... It will require readiness... to abandon the safe, standardized approaches to the delivery of government services... And it will take an equal dedication on the part of the people living in northern communities to develop their interest in self-government and their skills in decision-making."

- PREMIER A. E. BLAKENEY, DECEMBER 12, 1972

"The present physical, social and economic standards of Northern Saskatchewan are below the acceptable minimum standards of the rest of Saskatchewan. Northern Saskatchewan is geologically and geophysically a different land form and this results in different social and different economic problems, different life styles and different community structures. But I am not convinced that these differences necessitate a less viable socio-economic structure although at present that is the case. Because of these... you have the commitment of this government to change the traditional patterns of the ways the government will respond.."

- G. R. (TED) BOWERMAN, MINISTER OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN, DECEMBER 13, 1972

... new approaches in Saskatchewan's North

WHY A 'DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN'?

Until recently, provision of provincial services in northern Saskatchewan was achieved through the extension of traditional government departments based in the south. Northern programs were usually conceived in Regina and often amounted to little more than a transplant of southern concepts to a very different situation - different in culture, geography, and socio-economic realities.

It is only natural that programs for the North may not have received the special attention they require by departments responsible for serving the bulk of Saskatchewan's population located in the south. As well, a built-in result of having numerous departments active in serving communities scattered across the north was a lack of co-ordination, inconsistent objectives and programs which overlapped.

Though many individuals made sincere and worthwhile contributions in improving northern conditions and a number of northern programs were initiated, there was a growing consensus that a new approach was required for the north.

For years northern residents often commented that their needs were not "understood" in the south. In the late 50's and early 60's, government studies agreed and suggested establishment of a single agency designed to provide a northern approach to northern affairs. It was recommended that the general objective of such an agency should be to accelerate political, economic and social development in the north in order to bring the services and standards to a level comparable though not necessarily identical with those of the south.

Based on a commitment made to northern people, the single agency concept became a reality by an Act of the Saskatchewan Legislature proclaimed May 1, 1972. The Act created the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and introduced a new approach to the provision of government services in Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Northern needs are many and northern people understandably have high expectations of D.N.S. The problems of the north will not be resolved easily or quickly but the department is commited to joining with northerners to facilitate the fulfillment of their goals and aspirations. D.N.S. should be viewed as a catalyst for the development of human and natural resources through individual and community achievement.

Year One of the department's history was primarily a period when northern responsibilities were transferred from most other provincial government departments to D.N.S. Headquarters were established in La Ronge, staff recruited and the department's philosophy of responding to northern communities was established.

Today, with few exceptions, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is responsible for providing all provincial services to the north.

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NORTHERN DIRECTION OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS

The Department of Northern Saskatchewan is commited to encouraging northern direction of northern affairs. This new sense of northern direction is being achieved in several ways.

After a lengthy consultation process involving the Metis Society of Saskatchewan, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and all northern communities, the Government of Saskatchewan provided legislation in April, 1973, enabling creation of a Northern Municipal Council. In May the legislation was reviewed by a meeting of northern delegates and approved for implementation. The delegates also chose a committee to determine the electoral boundaries for such a council and following receipt of their recommendations in August, the machinery for an election was set up. Thirty-one candidates were nominated for five positions and on October 5, 1973, the first Northern Municipal Council was elected. The Council may also include two appointed members who must be residents of the north.

The N.M.C. has powers and duties similar to Municipal Councils in southern Saskatchewan and assumes responsibilities previously administered by the provincial government including implementation of various public works projects and regulatory by-laws. It will also be involved in a number of D.N.S. programs. Along with established municipal governments at Uranium City, La Ronge and Creighton and Band Councils on Indian Reserves, the N.M.C. provides all northern residents with an opportunity to democratically participate in local government.

At the community level - new LCA's (Local Community Authorities) are being elected as communities respond to the D.N.S. invitation to take control of their own affairs. Where established, local councils will have the right to determine local priorities. The Northern Municipal Council and D.N.S. will be resources on which they can draw.

Northern direction of Northern affairs is also involved in the administration of provincial responsibilities by D.N.S. Qualified northern residents are being sought for D.N.S. positions and emphasis is being placed on formal and informal training to enable northerners to assume new employment vacancies in the Public Service. As part of a program to decentralize services, northern residents have been hired as Area Co-ordinators to co-ordinate various D.N.S. activities at the community and regional levels. These senior positions will help ensure that programs and policies of D.N.S. reflect the priorities and concerns of northern people.

ORGANIZATION

Attached is a current departmental organization chart and map showing the department's jurisdictional area. The five regions shown on the map indicate the Northern Municipal Council electoral areas and the five D.N.S. administrative regions.

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D.N.S. SPECIFICS

To assist northerners in gaining more control of their economy, the Economic Development and Colleges Divisions of D.N.S. are responsible for several programs including:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND - A program to provide loans, grants and management advice to enable northern residents to establish co-operatives and other enterprises which will create jobs and improve services. Local committees and the Northern Municipal Council will participate in the allocation of funds.

NORTHERN TRAINING PROGRAM - A program of adult education to provide training and job skills related to economic development and the provision of local services. Local committees recommend types of courses desired and determine participation.

PROSPECTORS INCENTIVE PLAN - A program of training and contract employment involving northern people in the development of northern mineral resources.

AGRICULTURE TRAINING - The operation of three training farms to determine the potential of northern agriculture.

* * *

The critical need of new and better housing for northern people is being attacked by the department's Northern Housing Program. A five year subsidized home ownership program will provide 125 homes each year - more than tripling previous provincial housing programs. Local councils and the Northern Municipal Council will determine allocation on the basis of need.

* * *

Northern Education is becoming more meaningful for northern people as new northern programs are developed, elected school boards are organized and facilities expanded.

* * *

New and improved airfields and roads are being provided by the department's Construction Division. Water and sewer programs have been approved for four communities and are being planned for others.

* * *

A greater accent is being placed on rehabilitative social service work with additional staff and facilities for child welfare and correctional services. As job opportunities are developed, dependency on social assistance becomes less frequent and dollars and man-hours are used more constructively.

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An intensive study of fishing in northern Saskatchewan is being completed and will be examining the means of increasing income of commercial fishermen. The department continues to assist Co-operative Fisheries and is participating in experimental projects concerning use of equipment and marketing of fish. Resource consultants will be based in the north with northern trappers and fishermen directly participating in the formulating of policies and regulations.

* * *

Easier access to information and forums for discussion and opinion are the goals of the department's Northern News Services branch.

* * *

Local sawmills are being operated to provide materials for northern construction projects and a consulting firm is currently reviewing the use of northern timber in relation to maximum community benefit.

* * *

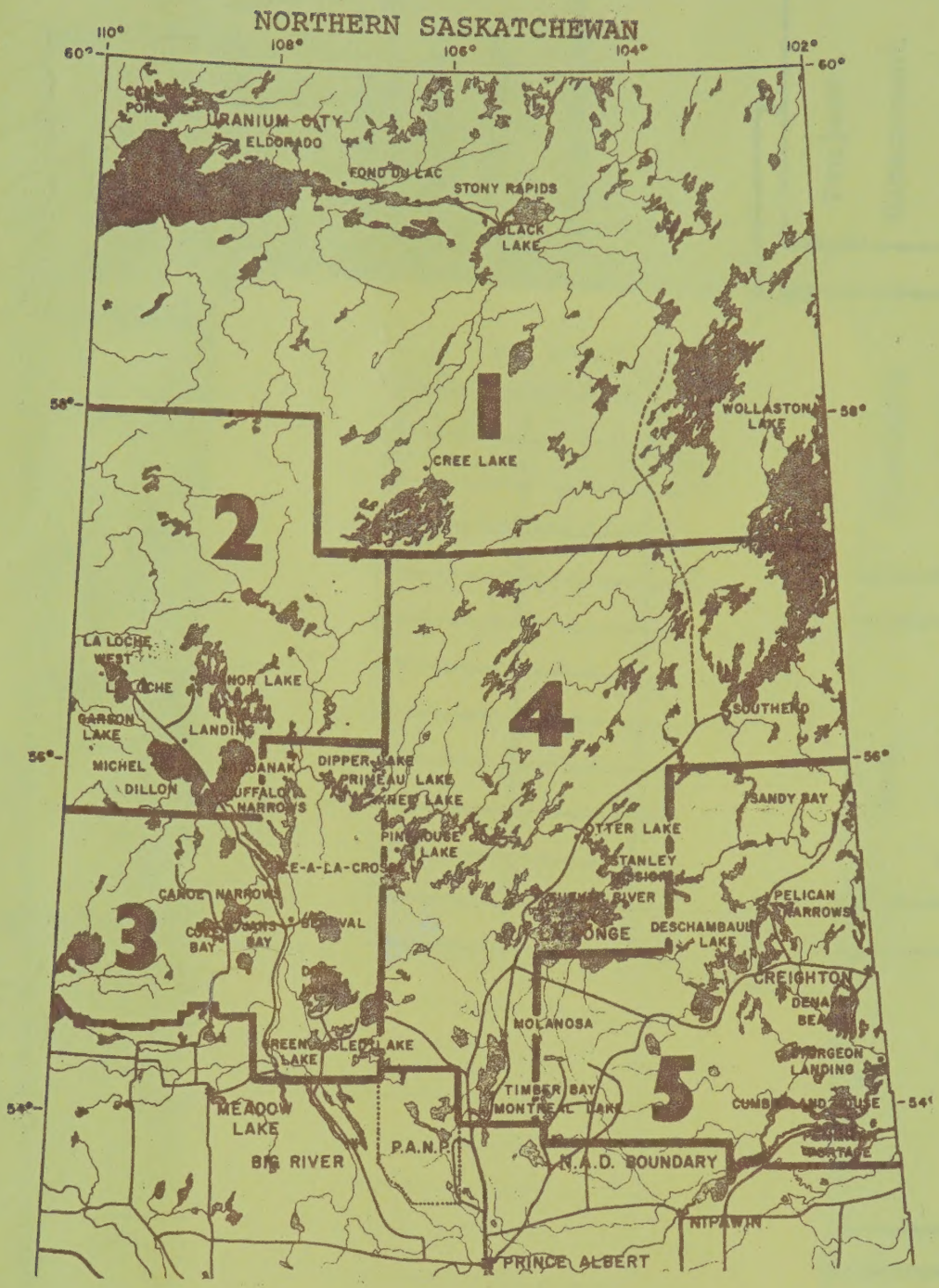
A priority concern for increased medical and dental facilities for the north is recognized. Construction of several clinic facilities is being planned and additional staff recruited.

* * *

D.N.S. is also working with other agencies to determine means of improving services and opportunities in the north. Negotiations are presently underway with the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion for possible funding of a multi-faceted northern development program. This possibility is being discussed with Community Councils, Band Councils and Metis Society Locals.

Sask Tel are proceeding with a program to extend microwave telecommunication facilities throughout the north and the CBC is being encouraged to extend television and radio services.

North Sask Electric and the Saskatchewan Power Corporation have reduced their rates in the north and are receiving D.N.S. assistance in extending power to unserviced areas.



Elected members of the Northern Municipal Council:

Area #1 - George Mercredi, Stony Rapids
Area #2 - Fred Thompson, Buffalo Narrows
Area #3 - Lawrence Yew, Jans Bay
Area #4 - Nap Sanderson, Pinehouse Lake
Area #5 - Lionel Deschambeault, Cumberland House

D.N.S. Area Co-ordinators:

Area #1 - Larry Fiss, Uranium City
Area #2 - Vacant
Area #3 - Gilbert McKay, Green Lake
Area #4 - Norman McAuley, La Ronge
Area #5 - Oscar Beatty, Deschambeault Lake

Locations with Local Community Authorities (LCA's):

- La Loche
- Buffalo Narrows
- Beauval
- Ile-a-la-Crosse
- Green Lake
- Cumberland House
- Sandy Bay

Date Due

MAR 10 '76			
MAR 17 '76			
MAR 26 '76			

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SASKATCHEWAN. DEPT. OF N. SASK.
AUTHOR

General info. re: Department of
TITLE

northern Sask.

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	DATE DUE
MAR 3 '76	J. Symington	MAR 10 '76
MAR 10 '76	RENEWAL	MAR 17 '76
MAR 18 '76	C Wayne Rasemice	MAR 26 '76

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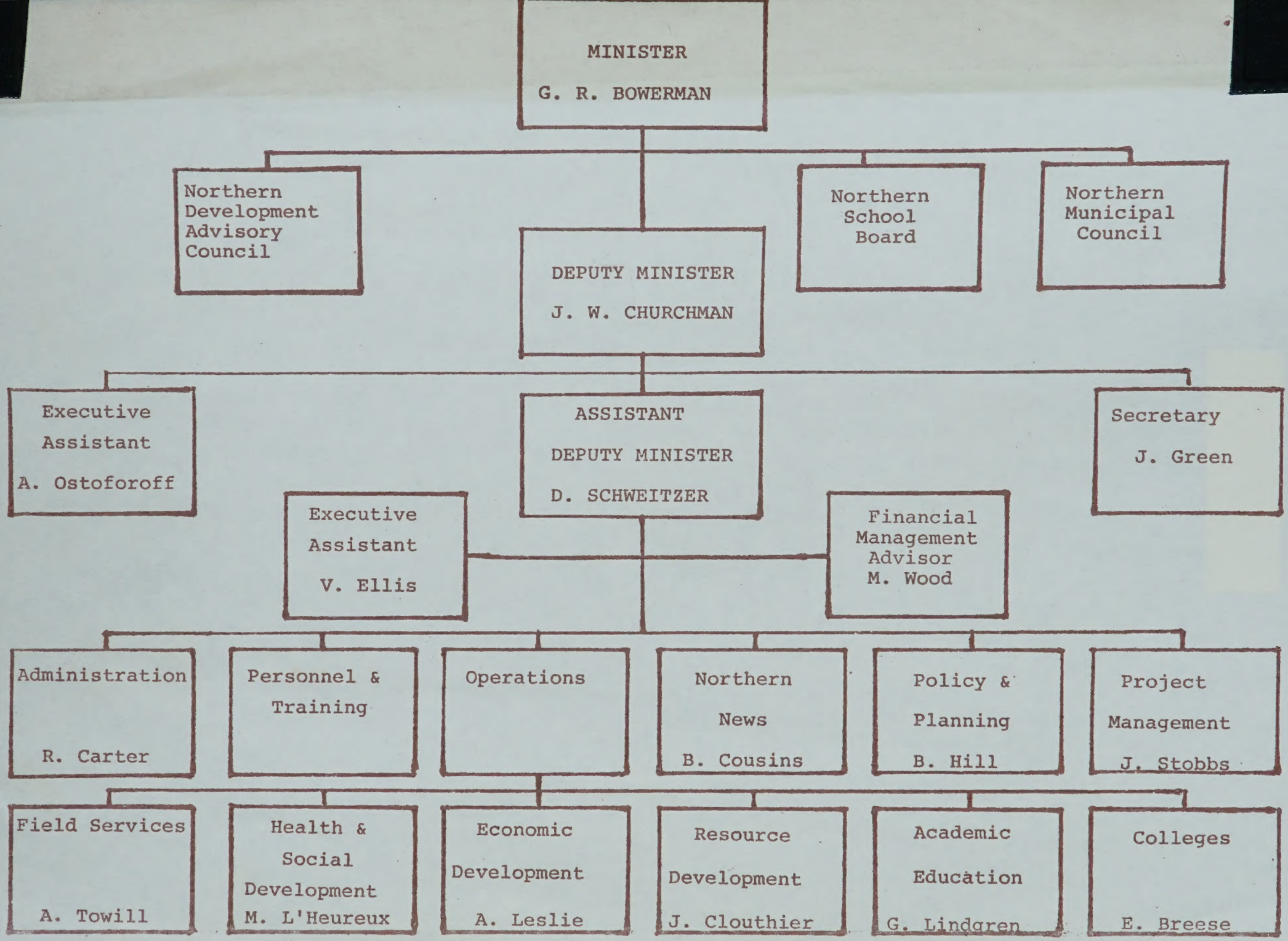
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Northern Development Advisory Council
Northern School Board
Northern Municipal Council
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J. W. CHURCHMAN
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A. Ostoforoff
ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER
D. SCHWEITZER
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